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ABSTRACT

This paper presents a profile of minority graduate students at the University of California, Berkeley. Following a brief overview of Berkeley's Graduate Minority Program (GMP), data is presented concerning the number of GMP students supported; available funds and average grants for students from 1968-69 to 1973-74; distribution of GMP students according to ethnicity from 1971-72 to 1973-74; registered minority graduate students, 1973-74; distribution of all registered minority students according to fields of study, Fall 1973; distribution of GMP students according to fields of study, Fall 1973; and distribution of 500 GMP students according to degree objective and number of years enrolled, 1973-74. The University's response to the needs of the minority student are reviewed in light of recruitment, selection, fields of study, and financial support. (MJM)

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AMERICAN EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH ASSOCIATION

Annual Meeting, 1974

Chicago, April 15 - 19, 1974

Subject	A Profile of Minority Graduate Students at the University of California, Berkeley: Recruitment, Selection, Fields of Study and Financial Support
Author	O. R. Collins, Ph.D. Associate Dean, Graduate Division and Professor, Department of Botany
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Our graduate schools are among the nation's greatest resources, and their most important responsibilities are to select and to train students who, upon completion of their degree programs, will occupy the leadership positions of the professions and academic disciplines. Accordingly, the way in which they select and train these future leaders produces consequences for all of human society, both inside and outside our national borders.

This is the context in which I will discuss graduate minority education at the University of California, Berkeley, ~~which as you know is located just across the bay from here~~. It is a university which has acquired a reputation for liberalism and innovativeness, along with its image of excellence in science and other fields of study, especially at the graduate and research levels. It is not too surprising, therefore, that some attention has focused on our efforts to bring graduate education into harmony with the real needs of ethnic minority populations. At the outset, I want to make it clear that, while we have made some headway, we have a long, long way to go before our minority populations are receiving a fair share of the benefits from the great resources which Berkeley's graduate programs represent. Very shortly I will provide facts and figures by way of documenting what we have been doing in recent years and how this is working out.

But first let's briefly examine why it is necessary to emphasize graduate <u>minority</u> education as a special area of concern, one around which this symposium was organized. For much of our country's history, the dominant population has viewed Blacks, Chicanos, Native Americans, and some other racial minorities more as problems for the society than as integral parts of it. How well I remember, for example, the first time I attended a ~~AAAS~~ meeting. It was in Atlanta, Georgia, in 1955, and serious controversy developed over whether Blacks should be permitted to attend the banquet at which the presidential address was to be delivered. This particular incident merely reflects the simple fact that governmental, educational and other institutions have historically been geared primarily to accomodate the needs of the dominant group.

In recent years there has been some forward movement in minority education in our universities and this has closely paralleled the political advancement of minorities, especially that of Blacks. The situation at Berkeley is more or less typical in this regard. During the sixties, several projects and programs were established in response to the insistent demands of various groups. On the whole, however, the campus faculty and administration were often ill-prepared to cope with anything more than a handful of minority students, particularly when they did not reflect the cultural and social values then prevailing on campus. And so, by the Fall of 1968, the campus was confronted with what became widely known as the "Third World Movement" which for a while very nearly paralyzed the university. This was soon after the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and the seriousness of the movement coupled with the conscience of many in the majority population, required that concessions be made. At that time, the number of minority persons holding regular faculty positions on campus was even smaller than miniscule. Consequently, in its hour of crisis, the university turned to non-minority persons of manifest liberal reputations, and simultaneously it rushed to put black faces in administrative positions, without too much regard for their qualifications. The latter became known in the black community at that time as the "nearest Negro syndrome."

Thus the climate in 1968, the year that Berkeley's Graduate Minority Program (GMP) was established, was one of turmoil and confusion. My involvement in the program, which is known locally as GMP, began in mid-1971.

It is this involvement which forms the basis of my being asked to address this audience. Since 1971 I have assembled some data and acquired a measure of insight into graduate education for minority group students, some of which I will now share with you.

The original objective of GMP was "to increase significantly the number of minority graduate students entering graduate work and obtaining advanced degrees at Berkeley." The first slide (Table 1) gives a general breakdown of the number of students supported and the amount of funds available during the first six years of the program's operation.

TABLE I

Number of GMP Students Supported, Available Funds, and Average Grant/Student 1968-69 to 1973-74

Year	Students	Grant Funds	Average Grant/ Students/Acad.Yr.
1968 - 1969	122	$ 288,000	$2,360
1969 - 1970	255	598,673	2,355
1970 - 1971	300	987,000	3,290
1971 - 1972	393	973,000	2,475
1972 - 1973	585	1,205,000	2,060
1973 - 1974	500	950,000	1,900

As you see, for each of the first five years, there was an increase in the number of students in the program, and except for grant funds in the fourth year, the budget reflected this steady increase also. The program's overall yearly budget is now stabilized at around the 1973-74 figure for the indefinite future. The long-term goal of the program is, of course, to fully integrate minority groups into the fabric of the university's

structure, so that special financial assistance will become unnecessary. How long the current budget level will be maintained should be a function of the amount of time required to achieve the long-term goal.

With the figures in the first table to serve as background, let us take a closer look at how the program operates. From its inception until now, it has functioned basically at three levels: 1) recruitment, 2) admission, and 3) financial assistance.

All graduate applications contain information about GMP and this constitutes a special recruitment effort by the university. Additional recruitment is carried out by individuals, departments, and a variety of interested organized groups.

At the time a student applies for admission, he is asked to indicate his ethnicity and whether he would like assistance from the Graduate Minority Program in his efforts to gain admission. If he does, a memorandum is attached to his admission application before it is forwarded to a department for review by a faculty committee. The memorandum points out that high potential students from minority backgrounds often do not meet all of the traditional admission requirements and that it would be in order for departments to evaluate success potential by more flexible criteria. In some instances, graduate deans are asked to give an opinion on the success potential of particular applicants and this also contributes to the evaluation process.

Applications of those admitted are then processed and evaluated to determine who gets financial assistance, and if so, how much. This involves three decision components: 1) academic potential, 2) financial need, and 3) field of study. Department rank-ordering of applicants serves as the basis for assessment of academic potential, while financial need is determined by our Office of Financial Aid. The latter provides us with a listing of those eligible as well as the amount of assistance for which each qualifies. Once these determinations are made applicants from departments with low minority representation are then given special priority ranking by GMP, especially if they are in fields for which graduates are in great demand in the job market.

Using the above criteria for selecting GMP awardees, the ethnic distribution during the last three years is as shown on the next slide (Table II).

TABLE II

Distribution of GMP Students According to Ethnicity from 1971-72 to 1973-74

	1971-72	1972-73	1973-74
Blacks	205	348	260
Chicanos	128	158	155
Native Americans	4	7	10
Oriental Americans	56	72	75
Totals	393	585	500

Unlike some other regions of the country, "minority" in California is not essentially a synonym for "Black." The situation here is complex, and GMP recognizes four ethnic minority groups as shown. Justification

for including Oriental Americans, as a group, among disadvantaged minorities is open to challenge, but there are arguments on both sides of the issue and these will not be discussed here. In this table, the totals in each category for the three years are basically a direct function of how many apply from each ethnic group, except for the Oriental Americans. From the program's beginning, Blacks have constituted the largest category, followed by Chicanos, Oriental Americans, and Native Americans. The figures shown in Table II are representative, although this year Blacks make up a smaller percentage of the total than in previous years.

When viewed in the context of the graduate population for the campus, GMP's role can be seen to be critical to the maintenance of current levels of minority enrollment. On the third slide (Table III), we will first focus attention on the totals in the first two columns of figures.

TABLE III

Registered Minority Graduate Students

1973-74

	Number		% of Total		Number in GMP	% of Registered in GMP
Blacks	443	681	4.9	7.5	260	58.7
Chicanos	192		2.1		155	80.7
Native Americans	46		0.5		10	21.7
Oriental Americans	424		4.7		75	17.7
Total Minorities	1,105		12.2		500	45.3

As you see, there are 1,105 minority students enrolled and they make up 12.2% of the total, which is 9,022. If Oriental Americans are excluded, the other three groups constitute only 7.5% of the total. These three groups make up roughly 30% of the California population, so although these figures represent a significant improvement over earlier years, we are obviously a long way from approaching population parity.

The last two columns of figures (Table III) indicate the number and percentage of minority students from each category who receive assistance from GMP. Of all Blacks enrolled, 260, representing 58.7% are in GMP, and the corresponding figures for the other groups are: Chicanos, 155 (80.7%); Native Americans, 10 (21.7%); Oriental Americans, 75 (17.7%).

The most popular fields of study for minority students on the Berkeley campus are in the non-science professional schools. Combined, these account for 732 students as the following slide (Table IV) shows:

TABLE IV

Distribution of All Registered Minority Students According to Fields of Study Fall 1973

Agricultural, Biological, and Health Sciences	69
Humanities	51
Mathematics and Statistics	38
Engineering	86
Physical Sciences	25
Non-Science Professional Schools	732
Social Sciences	126
Total	1127 *

* 22 students are listed in more than one field and this accounts for the difference in totals in this table as compared to TABLE III

Within this group, Education with 198, and Law with 196 have the largest two contingents, making up over half the total of 732 in the non-science professional schools. All social sciences together account for 126, followed by engineering, 86; agricultural and biological sciences, 69; humanities, 51; mathematics and statistics, 38; and physical sciences, 25.

Considering the economic and social backgrounds of most minority students, their choice of fields of study is very predictable. When only GMP students are included, the distribution pattern roughly parallels that of all registered minority students, as can be seen by comparing this slide (Table V) with the one preceding it.

TABLE V

Distribution of GMP Students

According to Fields of Study, Fall 1973

Agricultural, Biological, and Health Sciences	55
Humanities	30
Mathematics and Statistics	9
Engineering	7
Physical Sciences	3
Non-Science Professional Schools	338
Social Sciences	58
Total	500

In the last two years, the extreme skewness toward the non-science professional schools has been of some concern to us for several reasons, the job market situation being a primary one. A second reason is a desire to lessen dependency on GMP for financial support which we feel will come about as more minority students enroll in the natural and social sciences and the

humanities which have large numbers of assistantships to offer. A third reason is to introduce a significant minority presence in fields where policies and attitudes too often fail to accomodate the needs of minority populations. It is anticipated that such a presence will have a positive impact upon those in policy-making positions in these fields.

So far, the Berkeley campus has very few Blacks, Chicanos, and Native Americans in assistantship positions. The best currently available estimate shows that combined they hold fewer than 50 teaching and research assistantships. This is out of a total of close to 3,000. As I have already indicated, this is caused, in part, by the concentration of minority students in areas where relatively fewer assistantships are available. But this is only one of the causes. The others are more complex and include such factors as, the steady-state of the university's budget, educational and cultural backgrounds of minority students, the small number of minority faculty persons serving on admissions and other decision-making committees, and so forth. Of course, it also can be argued that the presence of GMP on campus is inadvertently a contributor to the situation we seek to correct. During times of great budgetary stress, department chairmen have a natural tendency to try to maximize departmental resources. Unfortunately, this sometimes takes the form of by-passing minority students for assistantship consideration, even though campus policies forbid this. They reason that these students have access to GMP funds, so they unofficially reserve these positions for majority students. Of course, in most cases, the education of minority students is adversely affected by such decisions, because in any good graduate school, assistantships provide some of the finest educational opportunities available. Moreover, these decisions

can have the dual effects of prolonging the need for existence of GMP and of freezing minority enrollment at its current low level. Another side effect is that undergraduates are too rarely exposed to minority teachers. Our efforts so far at funneling GMP students into the assistantship ranks will have to be improved upon before we can even begin to think of them as other than marginally successful.

However, within the next few years we are hopeful that a special project, funded jointly by GMP and the Division of Student Assistance of the U.S. Office of Education, will begin to have a significant impact upon the assistantship problem. This project involves intensive recruiting efforts by teams of interested faculty and minority graduate students who make visits to various colleges, both in- and out-of-state. The recruiting emphasis is on the sciences and academic disciplines. Once admitted, most of these students participate in summer programs on campus prior to their enrollment in graduate school. The programs are designed by faculty advisors in consultation with students and are tailored to individual needs. This may involve tutoring in areas of academic deficiency, work on a project in a research laboratory, attending special classes and seminars, as well as other related activities. An over-riding objective of the summer effort is to ease the transition from undergraduate to graduate school, and to introduce students to the outstanding facilities of the campus under personalized supervision of sympathetic faculty members. During the academic year, tutoring is provided for those who request it. In addition to these efforts, distinguished minority scholars are invited to give lectures on campus. These visits are intended to inspire and to

provide role models for minority students in fields where minority professors are rarely seen. In any case, the Minority Speakers Series has been very well received not only by students, but it is having a desirable effect on key faculty members also. In a few years, we should be able to determine the long-term impact of the special project and what effect it will have on the assistantship situation. For now, we can conclude that it has been responsible for allowing many to come to Berkeley who otherwise would not have come, and it has also assisted all who have participated in it, in one way or another. Accordingly, I suggest that more universities consider initiating similar projects and encourage our Federal Government to provide the necessary funding for these. In our particular case, the staff of the U.S. Office of Education, Division of Student Assistance, under the leadership of its Director, Dr. Leonard H. O. Spearman, has been most helpful not only by providing some financial support, but providing expert advice as well.

Before concluding this address, it is fitting that I summarize some of our accomplishments and make a few observations and recommendations regarding the future and graduate minority education. One way to assess achievement, of course, is to count numbers of students receiving graduate degrees. The last slide (Table VI) gives an indication of how we are doing.

TABLE VI

Distribution of 500 GMP Students

According to Degree Objective and Number of Years Enrolled, 1973-74

Ph.D. or Equivalent	J.D.	Masters	Teaching Credential
54 - 1st year	40 - 1st year	82 - 1st year	46 - 1st year
46 - 2nd year	57 - 2nd year	73 - 2nd year	
18 - 3rd year	61 - 3rd year		
10 - 4th year			
13 - 5th year *			

* The last figure in each column approximates 1974 graduation figures

Because the information for all minority students was not available at the time this speech was written, figures for GMP only are shown here. However, the distribution of these 500 students roughly parallels the distribution for the 1,105 minority students on campus. The chart shows 13 in their 5th year of Ph.D. work, and we anticipate that approximately that number (or somewhat fewer) will receive the highest degree this year. The other three programs J.D., Master's, and Teaching Credential are usually completed within three, two, and one year, respectively, so we expect to graduate approximately 61, 73, and 46 from those programs this year.

Unquestionably, GMP has accomplished its short-term goal which was, as you recall, "to increase significantly the number of minority graduate students entering graduate work and obtaining advanced degrees at Berkeley." We are proud of this achievement, but readily recognize that the long-term goal of integrating minority students into the fabric

of the university structure has not yet been realized, at least not nearly to the extent that would be needed to insure long-term continuation of a minority presence on campus at its current level, let alone at a level approaching population parity.

Where do we go from here, not only at Berkeley, but nationally? The urge for many of course is to slide back into past patterns of overt and covert discrimination against ethnic minorities in higher education, especially now that the campus noise level of the 1960's and early 1970's has abated somewhat, and we have more current problems such as the ecology and energy crises to occupy our attention. Those who have never approved of, or never understood, the need for special programs for minority students are likely even now to see these as a misuse of scarce graduate resources. Some of these critics are excellent at rationalizing their positions, and see themselves strictly as defenders of a system of meritocracy, rather than opponents of minority advancement. But determining who merits access to public resources is no simple matter. This applies not only to financial assistance but to admission as well. It is good to keep in mind that these judgements hinge, to one degree or another, on who is doing the judging. For example, when I graduated from all-black Southern University in 1957, there was no graduate school in my home state of Louisiana which was open to me. I was automatically denied access, solely on the basis of race. Yet, I suspect that those responsible for this situation, genuinely felt that I simply did not merit consideration, and for me to even raise the issue was to invite harassment, or even punishment, at the hands of the state government. However, quite aside from my personal

experience, there is no foolproof method for determining who merits admission and financial support. To be sure, selection criteria are necessary, if for no other reason than our schools cannot accomodate all who qualify, and moreover, those charged with making selections should be expected to be able to defend their decisions.

Ethnic minority status is but one of many valid considerations when judging who merits admission and support. To rely solely on grade point average, standardized test scores, and letters of recommendation is likely to continue to perpetuate a system of exclusion, or near exclusion, which has victimized minority populations for far too long. Certainly, these traditional success predictors are valuable in helping to determine who is most likely to succeed, whether he is a minority student or not, but they are only three criteria which can be effectively used to determine who merits access to our graduate schools. It is imperative that we select and train the best minority students in numbers commensurate with the needs of their communities, just as we have done, and continue to do for the best students from the majority population.

It is a great challenge faced by our universities--the challenge to creatively respond to the needs of the whole society, including those groups which have historically been denied the full benefits of our educational resources. These resources belong to everyone. They are only held in trust by those who run our educational institutions, and those who are so privileged have a responsibility to all of the people. To a very real extent, the future of our democracy depends on the way in which this responsibility is perceived and discharged.